

TRANSPORTATION AND MARKETING
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE, USDA

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 10.168
FY 2006 GUIDELINES**

PROGRAM SCOPE

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has announced the availability of approximately \$1 million in competitive grant funds in Fiscal Year 2006, which will be administered through the Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP). The FMPP is designed to promote the domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. It will be administered by the Marketing Services Branch (MSB) of AMS. The authorizing legislation for the FMPP includes the Agricultural Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627), the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976 (7 U.S.C. 3001-3006) and the recent amendment to the 1976 Act, the FMPP (7 U.S.C. 3005). Examples of direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities that may be funded by the FMPP include projects that address issues related to farmers markets, roadside stands, community supported agriculture programs, and other direct producer-to consumer marketing channels. AMS hereby requests proposals from eligible entities from the following categories: 1) agricultural cooperatives, 2) local governments, 3) non-profit corporations, 4) public benefit corporations, 5) economic development corporations, 6) regional farmers' market authorities, and 7) Tribal Governments. The maximum award per grant is \$75,000.

These guidelines are intended for use by applicants and their cooperators in developing proposals and carrying out the administrative and procedural requirements involved in applying for and conducting FMPP projects. The document addresses the following categories:

- [Eligible Entities](#)
- [Eligible Grant Uses](#)
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ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

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All eligible entities shall be domestic entities, i.e., those owned, operated, and located within one or more of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia only. Entities located within U. S. territories are not eligible.

Under this program, eligible entities must apply for FMPP funds on behalf of direct marketing operations that include two or more farmers/farm vendors who produce and sell their own products through a common distribution channel. AMS will award grants to and oversee the implementation of projects that encourage the development, promotion, and expansion of direct marketing of agricultural commodities from farmers to consumers.

Proposals should support agricultural marketing enterprises where farmers or vendors sell their own products directly to consumers, and where the sales of these farm products represent the core business of the entity.

Eligible applicants include:

- **Agricultural Cooperative** – A group- or member-owned entity or business that provides, offers, or sells agricultural products or services for the mutual benefit of the members thereof.
- **Local Government** - Local government means any unit of local government within a State, including a county, borough, municipality, city, town, township, parish, local public authority, special district, school district, intrastate district, council of governments, and any other instrumentality of local government.
- **Nonprofit Corporation** – Any organization or institution, including nonprofits with 501(c)(3) IRS status and accredited institutions of higher education, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.
- **Public Benefit Corporation** – A corporation organized to construct or operate a public improvement, the profits from which inure to the benefit of a State(s) or to the people thereof.
- **Economic Development Corporation** – An organization whose mission is the improvement, maintenance, development and/or marketing or promotion of a specific geographic area.
- **Regional Farmers' Market Authority** - An entity that establishes and enforces region, State, or county policies and jurisdiction over regional, State, or county farmers markets.

- Tribal Government - A governing body or a governmental agency of any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community (including any Native village as defined in section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 85 Stat. 688 (43 U.S.C. § 1602)) certified by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for the special programs and services provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

ELIGIBLE GRANT USES

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Projects appropriate for FMPP grants include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Innovative Approaches to Market Operations and Management – Projects that address operational or market management issues, with the aim of enhancing product value and sales, increasing revenue and efficiency, or reducing expenses. Such projects may address:

- Advertising and market promotion.
- Product or market labeling and signage.
- Waste management.
- Recycling.
- Liability coverage/insurance.
- Facility planning and/or design.
- Transportation and delivery systems.
- Market infrastructure, such as equipment for electronic benefits transfer (EBT), food processing and preparation, storage, packaging, and refrigeration.

2. Improving Access to Relevant Marketing and Financial Information – Projects that provide training, education, networking, and/or information-sharing opportunities for farmers, vendors, market managers, and market sponsors, with the aim of enhancing farmer/vendor profitability, market self-sufficiency, and/or product security and safety. Such projects may address:

- Direct marketing practices and methods, business planning, market growth management, recordkeeping, food handling and safety, and farmer and vendor selection, recruitment, and retention.

- Consumer trends and/or changing ethnic demographics, and their relationship to customer purchasing patterns.
- Alternative purchasing methods, such as EBT, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) coupons, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) coupons, and debit/credit technologies.
- Association and other organizational development.

3. Consumer-Based Education and Market Access - Projects that address ways to improve consumers' access to and utilization of direct farm markets/marketing outlets. Such projects may address:

- Consumer awareness and use of EBT technologies to include assessment, evaluation, and measurement of the impact of these technologies on market performance and/or consumer shopping patterns.
- Education that focuses on exposing consumers to new or unfamiliar agricultural products and product applications through such methods as cooking demonstrations or recipe development. Such projects should include an assessment, evaluation, and measurement of the impact of such education on market patronage, shopping patterns and/or consumption habits.
- Evaluation and assessment of the impact of farm market/marketing entities in providing access to fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income households, children, and seniors.

Apart from subject matter considerations, proprietary projects that benefit one agricultural producer or other individual will not be considered. Moreover, any information or data derived from a FMPP-funded project, along with any report developed from these information or data sources, must be made available to AMS, which reserves the right to share these results with the general public.

INELIGIBLE GRANT USES

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FMPP grant funds cannot be used to pay for:

- a. Acquisition of land, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of a building or facility.
- b. Political or lobbying activities.
- c. Any activities prohibited by 7 CFR parts 3015 and 3019.

Additional detail and justification must be provided for any purchase that is expected to exceed \$5,000.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

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Funding decisions are made on the basis of one round of competition. The deadline for submitting FY 2006 applications is cob May 1, 2006. For applications submitted via the Federal grants website, www.grants.gov, the date the proposal was received by that website will be considered the submitted date.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

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Applicants must submit the following information as part of their application packages; application packages which do not contain this information will not be considered.

Required Forms

Copies of the required application forms, listed below, may be requested from FMPP or can be obtained from local offices of other Federal or State agencies that commonly receive or submit applications for Federal funds. The required forms may also be downloaded from the FMPP website at www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/index.htm.

1. [Form SF-424](#), "Application for Federal Assistance." This form must have an original signature.
2. [Form SF-424A](#), "Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs."
3. [Form SF-424B](#), "Assurances – Non-Construction Programs."

The following instructions should be followed when completing specific information blocks on Form SF-424:

Block 5: Applicant Information - refers to the applicant submitting the application.

Block 9. Name of Federal Agency - AMS, USDA.

Block 10. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number - 10.168; Title - FMPP.

Block 11. Provide only the project title, not a detailed description.

Block 16. To determine if your proposal is subject to review under State Executive Order 12372, please consult the following website:
www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html.

DUNS Number

A Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is required for all FMPP applications and all Federal grants (68 FR 38 402). You may check to see if your organization already has a DUNS number, or if you do not already have a DUNS number, you may acquire one online at no cost at <https://eupdate.dnb.com/requestoptions/government/ccrreg/>. You may also acquire one by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line on 1-866-705-5711.

Eligibility Statement

Applicants should provide an explanation of how they meet the definition of an agricultural cooperative, local government, non-profit corporation, public benefit corporation, regional farmers market authority, or Tribal Government. Applications that do not contain sufficient information to determine the eligibility of the applicant will not be considered. The eligibility statement will be counted against the 10-page limit for the proposal narrative.

Standard Electronic Submissions

Proposals that are electronically submitted to AMS via e-mail must be sent to USDAFMPP@usda.gov. E-mailed proposal submissions must be in Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat format. Note that the USDAFMPP system can not accept attachments larger than 10 MB.

In all cases involving electronic submissions, the applicant must still prepare an originally-signed version of Form SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance," and mail the form (preferably by express mail or courier services) to:

Mr. Errol Bragg, Associate Deputy Administrator
Marketing Services Branch
Transportation and Marketing Programs, AMS, USDA
Room 2646-South
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C., 20250-0269
202/720-8317

FMPP will send applicants an e-mail message confirming the receipt of their application package.

Paper Submissions

For paper submissions, an original and one copy of the proposal, along with all required forms, must be submitted in one application package, preferably by express mail or courier. Because packages sent to the Agency through the United States Postal Service may be damaged or delayed due to security procedures at USDA Washington DC headquarters, the use of express mail or courier services is strongly recommended. Paper submissions must be sent to:

Mr. Errol Bragg, Associate Deputy Administrator
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1400 Independence Avenue, SW
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FMPP will send applicants an e-mail message confirming the receipt of their application package.

Applicants who submit paper applications are also encouraged to submit electronic versions of their proposals directly to FMPP via email addressed to USDAFMPP@usda.gov in Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat format.
Electronic Submissions via Grants.gov

Applicants may apply electronically for grants through the Federal grants website, www.grants.gov. Such applicants are not required to submit any paper documents to AMS. For information on how to apply electronically, please consult www.grants.gov/GetStarted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to initiate the electronic submission process on www.grants.gov well ahead of the application deadline.

Project Length

Projects should not exceed 18 months in length.

Proposal Narrative

A narrative description of the proposal is required. The format, style of presentation, and length may vary, depending on the nature of the project and requirements of the organization submitting the proposal, but the narrative should not exceed 10 pages, exclusive of supporting documents. The acceptable font for the narrative is 12-pitch Times New Roman, single-spaced, on 8.5 by 11-inch paper. The narrative should address each of the evaluation criteria mentioned in the "Proposal Evaluation" section of the guidelines (see below), and include the following categories:

- **Project Title** – Provide a title that captures the primary focus of the project.

- **Executive Summary** – Should not exceed 200 words.
- **Goals of the Project** – Provide a clear statement that includes the ultimate goal(s) and objective(s) (one or two sentences) of the project.
- **Background Statement** – Provide information regarding past, current, and/or expected future events, conditions, or actions taken that justify the need for the project.
- **Workplan and Resource Requirements** – Provide a statement that describes the planned scope of work, the anticipated stages of work and their associated timelines, and the resources required to complete the project. Identify who will do the work, whether collaborative arrangements or subcontractors will be used, the amount of resource commitments that will be assumed by the collaborators, if any, and the role(s) and responsibilities of each collaborator or project partner.
- **Expected Results** – Describe what results are expected to be accomplished in the project, and how the success of the project will be measured.

Supplemental Budget Summary - Provide sufficient detail about the budget categories listed on Form SF-424A to demonstrate that the budget is reasonable and adequate for the proposed work. This information should include:

- **Personnel.** To the extent possible, show hourly rates and estimated number of hours to be spent on the project. Hourly rates must not exceed \$55 per hour.
- **Travel.** Indicate anticipated travel expenses (e.g., mode of travel, how many people, how many days, destination, lodging, meals, etc., as applicable).
- **Equipment.** Indicate anticipated purchases of equipment. List separately each item of equipment and its cost.
- **Supplies.** Provide an estimate of projected supply expenditures.
- **Contractual.** Indicate if the expense represents a flat fee for services or an hourly rate. If the latter, indicate the hourly rate to be applied. Hourly rates must not exceed \$55 per hour. List the general categories of services the contract covers (e.g., professional services, travel, lodging, administrative expenses, etc.).
- **Indirect Costs.** Indirect costs may not exceed 10 percent of any proposed budget.

Supporting Documents

- Letters and/or other evidence of commitment by cooperators, contractors, or resource providers are strongly encouraged.
- Descriptions of experience or qualifications of principal project investigators should be brief.

Primary Project Manager Information – Provide the mailing address, telephone and facsimile number, and e-mail address for the primary person responsible for managing and/or overseeing the project.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

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Methods of Evaluating Proposals

Applicants should ensure that the following evaluation criteria are addressed within the proposal narrative. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Need for the project, excluding, however, routine operational expenses such as management salaries or other's salaries associated with normal operation of farm markets/marketing entities, utility bills, and insurance premiums.
- b. Direct benefit to farmers/vendors, provided any benefit for individual farmers/vendors are provided for every market participating farmer/vendor in a market/market entity.
- c. Project innovation.
- d. Degree of collaboration/partnerships and farmer/producer participation.
- e. Quantitative evaluation and measurement of the project's impact.
- f. Project sustainability/long-term impact.
- g. Transferability of project outcomes.
- h. Reasonableness of budget.

The Agricultural Marketing Service, Transportation and Marketing Program, will review, score and rank each applications based on the evaluation criteria. All eligible and complete applications will be ranked based on the total scores and the highest scoring applications will be selected until funding is depleted. Based on a total score of 100, the maximum numerical weight for each evaluation criteria are as follows:

1.	Need for Project	-	25
2.	Direct Benefit to Farmers/Vendors	-	15
3.	Reasonableness of Budget	-	15
4.	Transferability of Project Outcomes	-	10
5.	Project Innovation	-	10
6.	Project Sustainability	-	10
7.	Degree of Collaboration/Partnership	-	10
8.	Quantitative Evaluation/Measurement	-	<u>05</u>
	Total Score	-	100

Grant Amounts – The amount of funds available for FMPP grants in FY 2006 is approximately \$1 million. The maximum amount of Federal funds awarded for any one proposal will be \$75,000.

Number of Awards – No applicant can receive more than one FMPP grant.

POST-AWARD MANAGEMENT OF FMPP GRANTS

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Grant recipients are responsible for:

- Monitoring the performance of all project activities, and ensuring that the work is completed within the established time frame.
- Contacting the FMPP office 60 days before the grant's expiration date to request a no-cost time extension if for any reason the project cannot be completed within the established time frame. A letter from the grantee briefly explaining the need for the extension and specifying a new ending date is required.
- Ensuring that FMPP funds are used only for activities covered by the approved project and workplan.
- Ensuring that proper accounting procedures are followed.
- Sending FMPP a copy of any contract or secondary agreement relating to the project.
- Submitting 6-month progress reports and, no later than 90 days after the expiration of the grant agreement, submitting a final report summarizing findings and accomplishments. (For further details, see next section, "Reporting Requirements for Awarded Grants.")
- Submitting quarterly financial reports (Form SF-270) and, no later than 90 days after the grant expiration date, submitting a final financial report (Form SF-269A, or in cases where program income is involved, Form SF-269).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARDED PROJECTS

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Progress Reports

Progress reports are required at the midpoint of projects approved for one year and at six-month intervals for projects of longer duration. Progress reports should:

- Briefly summarize activities performed and milestones achieved for each objective or sub-element of the narrative.
- Note unexpected delays or impediments, as well as favorable or unusual developments.
- Outline work to be performed during the succeeding period.
- Comment on the level of grant funds and matching contributions expended to date on the project.

Final Report

A final report of results and accomplishments is due within 90 days following the grant ending date. The final report should include:

- A summary of the issue or problem being examined.
- Descriptions of how the issue or problem was addressed.
- Specific contributions of project partners.
- Results, conclusions and lessons learned.
- Current or future benefits to be derived from the project.
- Additional information available (publications, websites).
- Recommendations for future research needed, if applicable.
- Contact person for the project with telephone number and e-mail address.
- Description of the people, organizations, marketing entities and/or communities that have benefited from the project's accomplishments.

Final reports are required to fulfill the terms of the grant agreement, but they also represent an important vehicle for sharing research findings with Federal and State agencies and the public. To further this goal, the final report should be prepared in a

format which can be reproduced for wide distribution and is suitable for posting on the FMPP website.

REQUESTS FOR PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL STATUS REPORTS

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Payments of grant funds must be requested by the organization receiving the grant award by submitting a completed Form SF-270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement." Requests for payment must report the amount of funds that the grant recipient has already expended to carry out the project, along with a copy of an invoice that delineates the specific project expenditures that were incurred during the requested payment period. In exceptional circumstances, grant recipients may request payment advances. Such advances should be limited to the minimum amount needed to meet short-term disbursement needs.

A final submission of Form SF-269A, "Financial Status Report" (Form SF-269 if the project involved program income) is required no later than 90 days following the project's ending date.

Copies of the required financial status forms may be requested from FMPP or can be obtained from local offices of other Federal or State agencies that commonly receive or submit applications for Federal funds. The required forms can also be downloaded from the FMPP website at www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/index.htm. Completed forms should be signed by the appropriate organizational representative and the original forms should be submitted to FMPP by express mail or courier service. Grant payments will be made electronically.

RECORD RETENTION

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In accordance with Federal regulations, grant recipients should retain all records relating to the grant for a period of 3 years after the final financial status report was submitted to FMPP.

FMPP CONTACT

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